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Ingersoll - Influence of America
on the Mind. 1823.

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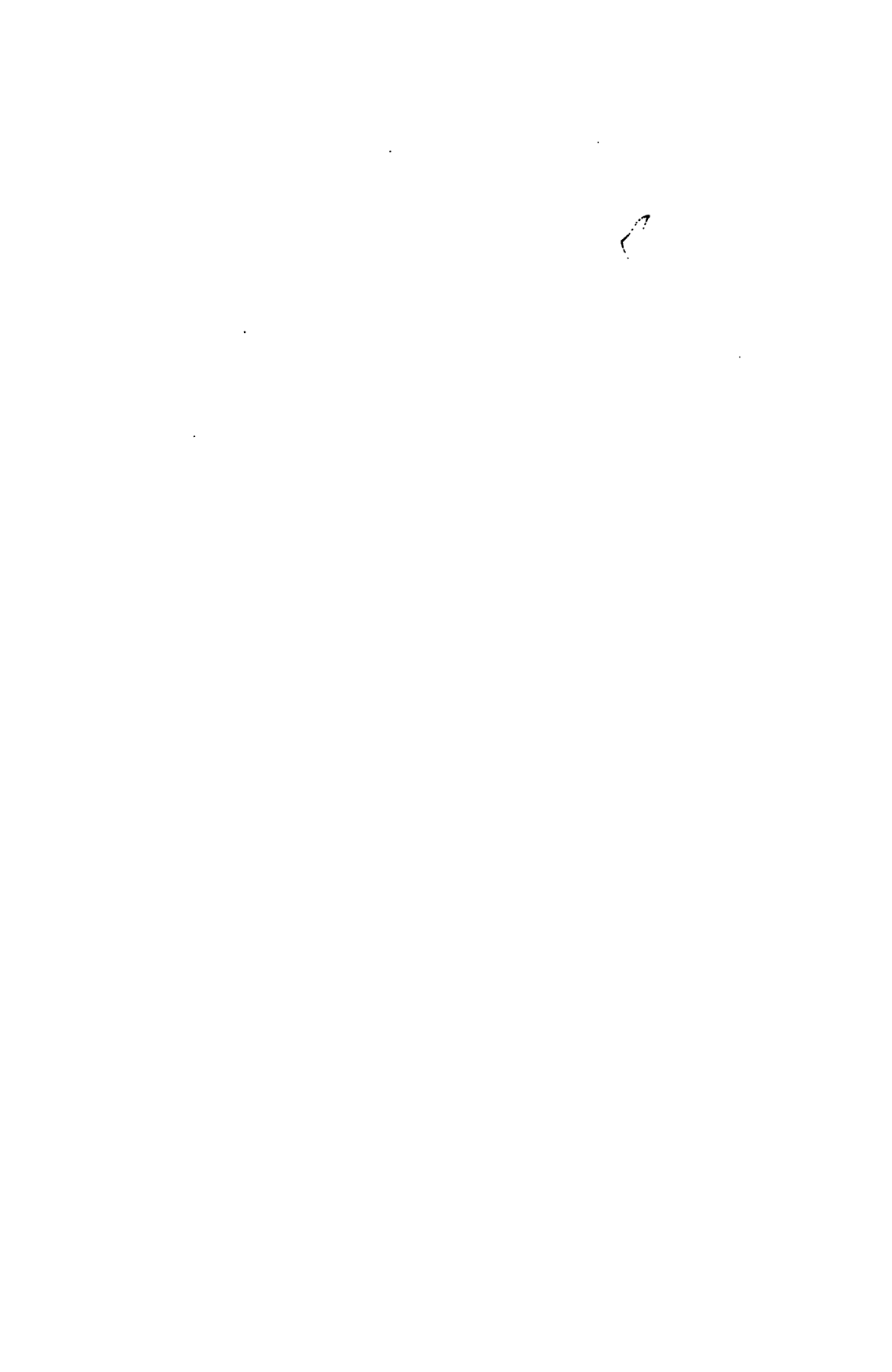
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1918



No 8.

A DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE

INFLUENCE OF AMERICA ON THE MIND;

BEING THE

ANNUAL ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,

AT THE UNIVERSITY IN PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE 18TH OCTOBER, 1823,

BY THEIR APPOINTMENT, AND PUBLISHED BY THEIR ORDER.



BY C. J. INGERSOLL,

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.



PHILADELPHIA :

PUBLISHED BY ABRAHAM SMALL.

.....

1823.

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AT a Special Meeting of the American Philosophical Society, held this day, it was

Resolved, that the thanks of the Society be communicated to Mr. INGERSOLL, for the oration pronounced by him, this day, by their appointment, and that he be requested to furnish them a copy for publication.

Extract from the Minutes.

R. M. PATTERSON, Secretary.

Hall of the Amer. Phil. Soc.

Oct. 18th, 1823.

A DISCOURSE, &c.

APPOINTED to deliver the annual discourse of the *American Philosophical Society*, I propose to sketch the philosophical condition of this country, and explain the influence of America on the mind. The task is not an easy one, owing to the extreme dispersion of the materials. Elsewhere intellectual improvements are collected in the accessible repositories of a metropolis, absorbing most of the intelligence of a whole nation, and flourishing with artificial culture long applied. In the United States we have no such emporium ; the arts and sciences are but of recent and spontaneous growth, scattered over extensive regions and a sparse population.

We will begin with the base of the American pile, whose aggrandisement, like the pyramids of Africa, confounds the speculations of Europe. While the summit and sides elsewhere are more wrought and finished, America excels in the foundation, in which we are at least the seniors, of all other nations. Public funds for the

the education of the whole community are endowments exclusively American, which have been in operation here for several ages, while the most improved governments of Europe are but essaying such a groundwork, which indeed some of them dread, and others dare not risk. It is nearly two hundred years since school funds were established by that aboriginal and immortal hive of intelligence, piety, and self-government, the Plymouth colony. These inestimable appropriations are now incorporated with all our fundamental institutions. By the Constitution of the United States it is the duty of government to promote the progress of science and the useful arts. Not one of the eleven new States has been admitted into the Union without provision in its constitution for schools, academies, colleges, and universities. In most of the original States large sums in money are appropriated to education, and they claim a share in the great landed investments which are mortgaged to it in the new States. Reckoning all those contributions federal and local, it may be asserted that nearly as much as the whole national expenditure of the United States is set apart by laws to enlighten the people. The public patronage of learning in this country, adverting to what the value of these donations will be before the close of the present century, equals at least the ostentatious bounties conferred on it in Europe. In one State alone, with but 275,000 inhabitants, more than forty thousand pupils are instructed at

the public schools. I believe we may compute the number of such pupils throughout the United States at more than half a million. In the city of Philadelphia, without counting the private or the charity schools, there are about five thousand pupils in the Commonwealth's seminaries, taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, at an expense to the public of little more than three dollars a year each one. Nearly the whole minor population of the United States are receiving school education. Besides the multitudes at school, there are considerably more than three thousand under graduates always matriculated at the various colleges and universities, authorised to grant academical degrees ; not less than twelve hundred at the medical schools ; several hundred at the theological seminaries ; and at least a thousand students of law. Nearly all of these are under the tuition of professors, without sinecure support, depending for their livelihood on capacity and success in the science of instruction. In no part of these extensive realms of knowledge is there any monastic prepossession against the modern improvements. Not long since chemistry, political economy, and the other great improvements of the age were excluded from the English universities as innovations unfit to be classed with rhetoric, logic, and scholastic ethics. Oxford and Cambridge, in the fine metaphor of Dugald Stewart, are immovably moored to the same station by the strength of their cables, thereby enabling the historian of the human mind to measure

the rapidity of the current by which the rest of the world are borne along. The schools are equally stationary. Notwithstanding their barbarous discipline, and the barbarous privileges of the colleges, they have always produced good Latinists and Hellenists. But American education is better adapted to enlarge and strengthen the mind, and prepare it for practical usefulness. In that excellent institution, the Military Academy, the dead languages are not taught, and that kind of scholarship is postponed to sciences certainly more appropriate to a military education. This is not the occasion to inquire whether those standard exercises of the faculties and roots of language may ever be supplanted without injury. But as it is certain that the many great men who have received education at the English seminaries is not a conclusive proof of their excellence, though often cited for the purpose, so it is also true, that eminent individuals have appeared in literature and science, without the help of that kind of scholarship. The founder of the American Philosophical Society was not a scholar in this sense; yet his vigorous and fruitful mind, teeming with sagacity, and cultivated by observation, germinated many of the great discoveries, which, since matured by others, have become the monuments of the age: And whether science, politics, or polite literature, was the subject of which *Franklin* treated, he always wrote in a fine, pure style, with the power and the charm of genius.

Successive improvements in the modern lan-

guages, continually perfecting themselves under the prevalence of liberal ideas, have brought them to a degree of moral certainty and common attainment, which must render the dead languages less important hereafter. Their study will be confined probably to a few ; and may, perhaps, in the lapse of time, perish under the mass of knowledge destined to occupy entirely the limited powers of the human understanding. While, therefore, we are discussing whether the learning of the ancient languages ought to be maintained, innovating time is settling the question in spite of unavailing efforts and regrets for the immortal authors of European literature. Thus we may understand why the Latin and Greek languages are less cultivated in America than in Europe. Unfettered by inveterate prepossessions, the mind, on this continent, follows in its march the new spirit that is abroad, leading the intelligence of all the world to other pursuits.

Since the career of this country began, education on the continent of Europe has severely suffered by political fluctuations, and continues to be thwarted by political superintendence. Whatever science and literature accomplish there must be in spite of a perplexing and pernicious education. Wanting the stability and tranquillity and security of free institutions, their existence is in perpetual fluctuation and jeopardy. The schools are regulated by one dynasty to day, by another on opposite principles to-morrow, as the instruments of each in its turn, employed as much in unlearning what had been

taught, as in learning what is to be inculcated, continually molested and convulsed by state intrusion. The arts and sciences which war requires and requites, may be encouraged and advanced : and fortunately for mankind, their extensive circle embraces many in which peace also delights or may enjoy. The northern universities have best preserved both their liberality and their usefulness. But in southern Europe, learning appears to be disastrously eclipsed where it has never ceased to receive Pagan and Christian sacrifice for more than two thousand successive years.—Liberty, says Sismondi, had bestowed on Italy four centuries of grandeur and glory ; during which, she did not need conquests to make her greatness known. The Italians were the first to study the theory of government, and to set the example of liberal institutions. They restored to the world, philosophy, eloquence, poetry, history, architecture, sculpture, painting, and music. No science, art, or knowledge could be mentioned, the elements of which they did not teach to people who have since surpassed them. This universality of intelligence had developed their mind, their taste, and their manners, and lasted as long as Italian liberty. How melancholy is the modern reverse of this attractive picture ! When even freedom of thought can hardly breathe, and freedom of speech or writing has no existence, revolution is the only remedy for disorder ; sedition infects the schools, rebellion the academies, and treason the universi-

ties. In America, where universal education is the hand-maid of universal suffrage, execution has never been done on a traitor ; general intelligence disarms politics of their chimerical terrors ; our only revolution was but a temperate transition, without mobs, massacres, or more than a single instance of signal perfidy ; every husbandman understands the philosophy of politics better than many princes in Europe. Poetry, music, sculpture, and painting, may yet linger in their Italian haunts. But philosophy, the sciences, and the useful arts, must establish their empire in the modern republic of letters, where the mind is free from power or fear, on this side of that great water barrier which the creator seems to have designed for the protection of their asylum. The monarchs of the old world may learn from those sovereign citizens, the ex-presidents of these United States, the worth of an educated nation : who, having made large contributions to literature and the sciences, live in voluntary retirement from supreme authority, at ages beyond the ordinary period of European existence, enjoying the noble recreations of books and benevolence, without guards for their protection, or pomp for their disguise, accessible, admired, protected, and immortalised. The Egyptians pronounced posthumous judgment on their kings : we try our presidents while living in canonised resignation, and award to those deserving it, an exquisite foretaste of immortality.

In adult life we may trace the effects of the causes

just indicated in education. The English language makes English reading American : and a generous, especially a parental nationality, instead of disparaging a supposed deficiency in the creation of literature, should remember and rejoice, that the idiom and ideas of England are also those of this country, and of this continent, destined to be enjoyed and improved by millions of educated and thinking people, spreading from the bay of Fundy to the mouth of the Columbia. Such is the influence of general education and self-government, that already over a surface of almost two thousand miles square, there are scarcely any material provincialisms or peculiarities of dialect, much less than in any nation in Europe, I believe I might say than in any hundred miles square in Europe ; and, what is perhaps even more remarkable, the German, Dutch and French veins which exist in different sections, are rapidly yielding to the English ascendancy, by voluntary fusion, without any coercive or violent applications. Adverting to the great results from the mysterious diversity of the various languages of mankind, the anticipation is delightful in the effects of the American unity of tongue, combined with universal education throughout this vast continent,—the home of liberty at least, if not the seat of one great empire.

But speaking and writing the language of an ancient and refined people, whose literature preoccupies nearly every department, is, in many respects, an unexampled disadvantage in the comparative estimate.

America cannot contribute in any comparative proportion to the great British stock of literature, which almost supercedes the necessity of American subscriptions. Independent of this foreign oppression, the American mind has been called more to political, scientific, and mechanical, than to literary exertion. And our institutions, moreover, partaking of the nature of our government, have a levelling tendency. The average of intellect, and of intellectual power in the United States, surpasses that of any part of Europe. But the range is not, in general, so great, either above or below the horizontal line. In the literature of imagination, our standard is considerably below that of England, France, Germany and perhaps Italy. The concession, however, may be qualified by a claim to a respectable production of poetry; and the recollection that American scenes and incidents have been wrought by American authors into successful romances, some of which have been re-published and translated, and are in vogue in Europe; and that even popular dramatic performances have been composed out of these incidents. The stage, however, is indicative of many things in America, being engrossed by the English drama and English actors. But as a proof of American fondness, if not taste, for theatrical entertainment, I may mention here that an English comedian has lately received for performances before the audiences of four or five towns, whose united population falls short of four hundred thousand people, a much larger income than any of the actors of that country receive in which this sort of

intellectual recreation is most esteemed. There would be no inducement for strolling across the Atlantic, if the largest capital in Europe afforded similar encouragement, taking emolument as the test, and London with 1,200,000 inhabitants as the standard. As another remarkable proof of the state of the stage in the United States, I may add that an eminent American actor appears in the same season, (and it is practicable within the same month) before audiences at Boston and New-Orleans, compassing two thousand miles from one to the other, by internal conveyance. Such is the philosophical, as well as natural, approximation of place, and the unity of speech throughout that distance.

In the literature of fact, of education, of politics, and of perhaps even science, European pre-eminence is by no means so decided. The American schools, the church, the state, the bar, the medical profession, are, all but the last, largely, and all of them adequately, supplied by their own literature. Respectable histories are extant by American authors of the States of Kentucky, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire ; besides some general histories of New England, and several geographical and topographical works on Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, containing histories of their settlements. Our national histories, inferior in subordinate attractions to the romantic historical fictions of Europe, are composed

of much more permanent and available materials. In biography, without equal means, have we not done as much since we began as our English masters? In the literature as well as the learning of the sciences, botany, mineralogy, metallurgy, entymology, ornithology, astronomy, and navigation, there is no reason to be ashamed of our proficiency. In mathematics and chemistry, our comparative deficiency is perhaps the most remarkable. In grammatical researches, particularly in the interesting elements of the Indian languages, American erudition has preceded that of Europe, where some of the most learned and celebrated of the German and French philologists have caught from American publications, the spirit of similar inquiry. In natural and political geography our magnificent interior has produced great accomplishments, scientific and literary. The maps of America have been thought worthy of imitation in Europe. Mr. Tanner's Atlas, lately published, is the fruit of a large investment of money and time, and reflects credit on every branch of art employed in its execution. The surveys of the coast now making by government, will be among the most extensive, accurate, and important memorials extant. Several scientific expeditions have likewise been sent by the government at different times into the western regions, whose vast rivers, steppes and deltas have been explored by learned men, whose publications enrich many departments of science, and are incorporated with applause into the useful literature of the age. One of the most copious and authentic

statistical works in print, is an American production, which owes its publication to the patronage of Congress. The public libraries, particularly those of Cambridge University, of the New York Historical Society, of the American Philosophical Society, of the city of Philadelphia, of Congress, and others which might be enumerated, abound with proof and promise of the flourishing condition and rapid advances of literature and science throughout America. A single newspaper of this city, contains advertisements, by a single bookseller, of more than one hundred and fifty recent publications by American authors from the American press, comprehending romance, travels, moral philosophy, mineralogy, political and natural geography, poetry, biography, history, various scientific inquiries, and discoveries, botany, philology, oratory, chemistry applied to the arts, statistics, agricultural and horticultural treatises, strategy, mechanics, and many other subjects. From this ample and creditable catalogue I may select for especial notice the Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences as a work of uncommon merit; and the profound and elaborate report on Weights and Measures, as a laudable specimen of official function.

The first and the present Secretaries of the Department of State, who have both made reports on this important branch of scientific politics, rank among the foremost scholars of the age by their eminence in various literary and scientific attainments. The American state papers, generally, have received the homage of the most illustrious states-

men of England, for excellence in the principles and eloquence of that philosophy which is the most extensively applied to the affairs of men: and their publications afford large contributions to its literature. Whether any policy be preferable to another, is generally a merely speculative topic. But I may with propriety assert that the United States have been the most steadfast supporters of maritime liberality, of inter-national neutrality, and of the modern system of commercial equality. They were the first to outlaw the slave trade, and the first to declare it piratical. Great Britain is imitating their example in commercial, colonial, navigation, penal, and even financial, regulations. France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, parts of Germany, and South America, have in part adopted their political principles. And in all the branches of political knowledge, the American mind has been distinguished.

The publication of books is so much cheaper in this country than in Great Britain, that nearly all we use are American editions. According to reports from the Custom-houses, made under a resolution of the Senate in 1822, it appears that the importation of books bears an extremely small proportion to the American editions. The imported books are the mere seed. It is estimated that between two and three millions of dollars worth of books are annually published in the United States. It is to be regretted, that literary property here is held by an imperfect tenure, there being no other protection for it than the provisions of an ineffi-

cient act of Congress, the impotent offspring of an obsolete English statute. The inducement to take copyrights is therefore inadequate, and a large proportion of the most valuable American books are published without any legal title. Yet there were one hundred and thirty five copy rights purchased from January 1822 to April 1823. There have been eight editions, comprising 7500 copies of Stewart's Philosophy published here since its appearance in Europe thirty years ago. Five hundred thousand dollars was the capital invested in one edition of Rees' Cyclopædia. Of a lighter kind of reading, nearly 200,000 copies of the Waverley novels, comprising 500,000 volumes, have issued from the American press in the last nine years. Four thousand copies of a late American novel were disposed of immediately on its publication. Five hundred dollars were paid by an enterprising bookseller for a single copy of one of these novels, without any copy right, merely by prompt republication to gratify the eagerness to read it. Among the curiosities of American literature, I must mention the itinerant book trade. There are, I understand, more than two hundred wagons which travel through the country, loaded with books for sale. Many biographical accounts of distinguished Americans are thus distributed. Fifty thousand copies of Mr. Weem's Life of Washington have been published, and mostly circulated in this way throughout the interior. I might add to these instances, but it is unnecessary, and would be irksome. Education, the sci-

ences; the learned professions, the church, politics; together with ephemeral and fanciful publications, maintain the press in respectable activity.

The modern manuals of literature and science, magazines, journals and reviews, abound in the United States, although they have to cope with a larger field of newspapers than elsewhere. The North American Review, of which about four thousand copies are circulated, is not surpassed in knowledge or learning, is not equalled in liberal and judicious criticism, by its great British models, the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews, of which about four thousand copies are also published in the United States. Written in a pure, old English style, and, for the most part, a fine American spirit, the North American Review, superintends with ability the literature and science of America.

Not less than a thousand newspapers, some of them with several thousand subscribers, are circulated in this country; the daily fare of nearly every meal in almost every family; so cheap and common, that, like air and water, its uses are undervalued. But a free press is the great distinction of this age and country, and as indispensable as those elements to the welfare of all free countries. Abundant and emulous accounts of remarkable occurrences concentrate and diffuse information, stimulate inquiry, dispel prejudices, and multiply enjoyments. Copious advertisements quicken commerce; rapid and pervading publicity is a cheap police. Above all the press is the palladium of liberty. An American would forego the charms of France or Italy

for the luxury of a large newspaper; which makes every post an epoch, and provides the barrenest corners of existence with an universal succedaneum. Duly to appreciate the pleasures of it, like health or liberty, we must undergo their temporary privation. Nor is our experience of the licentiousness of the press too dear a price to pay for its freedom. It is a memorable fact in the history of American newspapers, that while some of the most powerful have been consumed in the combustion of their own calumnies, on the other hand, the most permanent and flourishing are those least addicted to defamation. It is also a fact, that the most licentious newspapers which have appeared in America, were edited by Europeans. The American standard is equally removed from the coarse licentiousness which characterises much of the English press, and the constraints of that of the rest of Europe—and this standard has been established, while state prosecutions have been falling into dislike. Our newspapers are regulated by a public tact much truer and stronger than such ordeals. The same ethereal influence in a free temperature, is equally effective to preserve the good from obloquy, and to consign the unworthy to degradation. Where the press is perfectly free, truth is an overmatch for detraction. Many of our public men have constantly enjoyed the public favour, in spite of intense abuse; and have survived its oblivion, to receive a foretaste of posthumous veneration. Under the light of these results, the press has learned the value of temperance, and while all the avenues of private redress

are open to those who choose to seek it, state prosecutions have nearly disappeared. Irreligious, obscene, and seditious publications, are infinitely more common from the English than from the American press : scurrilous and libellous newspapers exist to be sure, but they are the lowest and most obscure of the vocation ; whereas in England, some of the most elevated and best patronised, are the most scandalous and personal. In the darker ages, dungeons, scaffolds, torture, and mutilation, were the dreadful, but vain restraints put on the understanding. Can it be supposed, that in this enlightened æra, punishment, however mitigated, will do more than inflame it ? And what is the English law of public prosecution for libels, but a milder remnant of those principles ? By which, infidelity, blasphemy, sedition, treason, and individual calumny, are provoked, disseminated and infuriated. Experience has taught us, that the freedom of the press is the best protection against its abuse, and that its transient licentiousness is part of the very nature of the blessing itself. The splendid skies, forests and foliage of America, with which Europe has nothing of the kind to compare, are inseparable from those vicissitudes and extremities of weather and seasons, which, while menacing desolation, purify and sublimiate existence. This American deduction of the much apprehended postulate of the press, is obviously and rapidly gaining converts in England, whence perhaps it may ultimately spread over Europe, and abolish the pernicious alternatives there

prevalent. Without it, the press must cause convulsions, and retard the progress of the mind. The English newspaper press, much less free by law than the American, is in practice much more licentious. A late number of the *Quarterly Review*, (which is no mean authority on such a point) admits, in so many words, that the occupation of the English daily press is, to 'do every thing that honor and honesty shrink from': to which character the absence of decency should be superadded. The Attorney General protects government from libels; but the Chancellor has brought about a most preposterous state of things between the right of literary property, and the want of right in obscene, blasphemous, or otherwise illegal subjects of that property. English party vituperation is much coarser and more personal than ours. But, without going into politics, it may suffice to notice the difference in other things. There are vented in the London newspapers, regular and perennial streams of defilement—polluting police reports, details of inhuman amusements, pugilistic and others, indelicate particulars of various private occurrences, the infamous amours of the royal and noble, are catered for every day's repast, and demanded with an eagerness which bespeaks a vitiated appetite. It seems to be thought that publicity, like execution, deters from crimes, when assuredly, they both stimulate their perpetration. There is another office of the English press, extremely derogatory to the press itself, and injurious to society. I mean the journalising private and domestic con-

cerns, and the most trivial transactions of social intercourse, for the gratification of a vanity, peculiar to the aristocracy of that kingdom. The effects of this proclamation of the common affairs of private life, can hardly fail to be injurious to the female character in particular, whose modesty and retirement are thus perpetually broken in upon. The American newspaper press is conducted in better taste, and with more dignity.

From literature the transition is natural to the arts, which minister to usefulness, comfort and prosperity, individual and national. Under their authority to provide for the encouragement of the arts and sciences, the United States, in thirty years, have issued about four thousand four hundred patent rights for new and useful inventions, discoveries, and improvements. By the prevailing construction of the acts of Congress, American patentees must be American inventors or improvers, and are excluded from all things before known or used in any other part or period of the world. The English law allows English patentees to monopolise the inventions, discoveries, and improvements of all the rest of the world when naturalised in Great Britain. Notwithstanding this remarkable disadvantage, I believe the American list of discoveries is quite equal to the English. The specimens and models open to public inspection in the national repository at Washington, are equal, I understand, to any similar collections in England or France, and superior to those of any other country. It will hardly be expected that I should undertake to men-

tion even the most remarkable articles of this immense museum, containing every element of practical science, of mechanism, of refinement, and of skill. I may be allowed, however, to say that the cotton gin has been of more profit to the United States, than ten times all they ever received by internal taxation ; that our grain mill machinery, applied to the great staples of subsistence, is very superior to that of Europe ; that there are in the patent office models of more than twenty different power looms, of American invention, operated on, and weaving solely by extraneous power, steam, water, wind, animals, and otherwise ; and that the English machines for spinning have been so improved here, that low-priced cottons can be manufactured cheap enough to undersell the English in England, after defraying the charges of transportation. Where American ingenuity has been put to trial it has never failed. In all the useful arts, and in the philosophy of comfort,—that word, which cannot be translated into any other language, and which, though of English origin, was reserved for maturity in America, we have no superiors. If labour saving machinery has added the power of a hundred millions of hands to the resources of Great Britain, what must be the effect of it on the population and means of the United States ? Steam navigation, destined to have greater influence than any triumph of mind over matter, equal to gunpowder, to printing, and to the compass, worthy to rank in momentum with religious reformation, and civil liberty, belongs to America. A member of this Society, in his elo-

quent appeal to the judgment of Great Britain, has argued this claim ably on abstract reasoning. But, without disputing the conceptions and experiments of England, France, and Scotland, of Worcester, Hulls, Juffrou, or Miller, or entering at all into the question of prior imagination, it has always appeared to me that there is a plain principle on which to rest the rights of this country. Steam navigation was reserved for the genius of those rivers, on a single one of which there is already more than a hundred steam-boats, containing upwards of fourteen thousand tons, and in whose single sea port, fifty steam boats may be counted at one time. This was the meridian to reduce to practical results, whatever conceptions may have existed elsewhere on this subject. Necessity, the mother of this invention, was an American mother; born, perhaps, on the shores of the Potomac, the Delaware, or the Hudson, yet belonging to the Missouri, the Arkansas, the Mississippi, and the Pacific ocean. By a very useful book called the *Western Navigator*, (published in this city,) it appears that the entire length of the Mississippi river is 2500 miles, of the Missouri 3000, of the Arkansas 2000, of the Red 1500; and from the recent works of Major Long and Mr. Schoolcraft, it is ascertained that a large number of great tributaries unite their waters with these prodigious floods, washing altogether, according to the summary of the author of the *Western Navigator*, in the valley of the Ohio, 200,000 square miles, in the valley of the Mississippi proper, 180,000, in that of the Missouri, 500,000, and in that of

the lower Mississippi, 594,000, giving a total of 1,210,000 miles as the area of what is termed the Mississippi basin. Most if not all of these vast streams are unnavigable but by steam boats, owing to the course of their currents and other circumstances. These then are the hundreds of steam boats, which have been abandoned in some parts of Europe, as too large for their rivers, and too expensive for their travelling.—In less than ten years from this time, steam boats may pass from the great lakes of the north-west by canals to the Atlantic, thence to the isthmus of Darien, and across that to China and New Holland. They now ply like ferry boats from New York to Pensacola, New Orleans and Havana, with the punctuality and security, and more than the accommodation, of the best land carriage of Europe. Wherever this wonderful invention appears, overcoming the winds and waves by steam, measuring trackless ocean distances by the quadrant, and protected from lightning by the rod, it displays in every one of these accomplishments the genius of America.

In the ordinary art of navigation, the construction, equipment, and manipulation of vessels, commercial and belligerent, America is also conspicuous. The merchant vessels of the United States, manned with fewer hands, perform their voyages, generally, in one third less time than those of the only other maritime people to be compared with them. And without referring to the achievements of the American navy as credentials of courage or renown, I may with propriety remark, that an intel-

ligent and scientific fabrication and application of arms, ammunition, ships, and all the materials of maritime warfare, are unquestionably demonstrated by their success in it.

The mechanics, artisans, and laborers of this country are remarkable for a disposition to learn. Asserted European superiority has been of great advantage to America in preventing habitual repugnance to improvement, so common to all mankind, especially the least informed classes. Superior aptitude, versatility and quickness in the handicrafts, are the consequences of this disposition of our people. A mechanic in Europe is apt to consider it almost irreverent, and altogether vain to suppose that any thing can be done better than as he was taught to do it by his father or master. A house or ship, is built in much less time here than there. From a line of battle ship, or a steam engine, to a ten penny nail, in every thing, the mechanical genius displays itself by superior productions. The success of a highly gifted American mechanical genius now in England, seems to be owing in part to his adapting his improvements, by a happy ingenuity, to the preservation of machinery, for which several English mechanics have been enriched and ennobled, but which would have been superseded as useless had it not been thus rescued.

If a ship, a plough and a house be taken as symbols of the primary social arts of navigation, agriculture and habitation, we need not fear comparisons with other people in any one of them. In the intellectual use of the elements, the com-

To these imperfect views of education, literature, science, and the arts, I will add sketches of the American mind, as developed in legislation, jurisprudence, the medical profession and the church ; which, in this country, may be considered as the other cardinal points of intellectual exercise.

Representation is the great distinction between ancient and modern government. Representation and confederation distinguish the politics of America, where representation is real and legislation perennial. Thousands of springs, gushing from every quarter, eddy onward the cataract of representative democracy, from primary self-constituted assemblies, to the State Legislatures, and the national Congress. Three thousand chosen members represent these United States, in five and twenty Legislatures. There are, moreover, innumerable voluntary associations under legislative regulations in their proceedings. I am within bounds in asserting, that several hundred thousand persons assemble in this country every year, in various spontaneous convocations, to discuss and determine measures according to parliamentary routine. From bible societies to the lowest handicraft there is no impediment, but every facility, by law, to their organisation : And we find not only harmless but beneficial, those various self-created associations, which in other countries give so much trouble and alarm. It is not my purpose to consider the political influences of these assemblies, nor even their political character. But their philosophical effect on the individuals composing them, is to sharpen

their wits, temper their passions, and cultivate their elocution : While this almost universal practice of political or voluntary legislation, could hardly fail to familiarise a great number of persons with its proprieties. The mode of transacting business is nearly the same in them all, from the humblest debating club to Congress in the capitol. Legislation in the United States is better ordered, more deliberative, decorous, and dignified, much less tumultuous or arbitrary and more eloquent than in Europe. Continual changes of the political representatives, afford not less than ten thousand individuals spread throughout the United States, practically familiar with the forms and principles of legislation, who, through the vivid medium of a free press, constitute, as it were, an auditory greatly superior to that of any other nation. A large proportion of this great number of practical legislators, is qualified by the habits of discussion incident to such employment, and perfect freedom, to deliver their sentiments in public speaking ; which, being in greater request, of greater efficacy, and at greater liberty in America than in Europe, is naturally more prevalent and powerful here than there. It is a striking view of the ideas of legislation in Europe, that within the last thirty years France and Spain have waged destructive wars for legislatures, consisting of single assemblies ; a constitution, which in America, would not be thought worth so much bloodshed.

The much abused French revolution, has given to that country a Legislature of two houses, and a press of considerable freedom. But the peers are

lost in the secrecy of their sessions: and the deputies can hardly be called a deliberative assembly. Few speak, inasmuch as most of the orations are read from a pulpit: and still fewer listen, amidst the tumults that agitate the whole body. To crown these frustrations of eloquent debate, when it becomes intense and critical, as it must be, to do its offices, the proceedings are sometimes closed by an armed force, marched in to seize and expel an obnoxious orator. This is certainly not the philosophy of legislation.

In Great Britain, an excessive number is crowded into an inconvenient apartment, where but few attempt to speak, and few can be brought to listen: and where both speakers and hearers are disturbed by tumultuous shouts and unseemly noises, not, according to our ideas, consonant with either eloquent or deliberative legislation. In theory, the House of Commons contains nearly 700 members: in practice the most important laws are debated and enacted by sixty or fifty. Owing to the want of personal accommodation, when the house is crowded, its divisions to be counted are attended with great confusion. Most of the bills are drafted, not by members, but by clerks hired for that purpose: to which is owing much of the inordinate tautology and technicality of modern acts of Parliament. In theory and principle there is no audience, and in fact, bystanders are not permitted but occasionally, under inconvenient restrictions. Reports and publications of the debates are unauthorised, and of course imperfect, notwithstanding the exploits of

stenography. Although Parliament is omnipotent, yet a member may not publish abroad what he says in his place, without incurring ignominious punishment as a libeller: which punishment was actually inflicted not long ago on a peer, proceeded against by information, for that offence. In France, the press is, in this respect, freer than in England. The publication of speeches in the Legislature is considered an inviolable right, which, among all the revocations of the present government, has never been molested or called in question. By a perversion of the hours, unknown, I believe, in any other country or age, most of the business of Parliament is done in the dead of night, to which, probably, many of the irregularities now mentioned are ascribable. The great popular principles which have preserved the British Parliament, while every other similar attempt in Europe has failed, or nearly so, and its brilliant political performances, have recommended it to admiration, notwithstanding these disadvantages; and indeed sanctioned them as part of the system. But unprejudiced judgment must allow, that all these are imperfections which have no place in Congress. Hence it is, that there are not now, and probably never were at any one time, more than two or three members of Parliament actuated by the great impulses of oratory: and that the talent of extemporaneous and useful eloquence always has been much more common in Congress. Burke's inimitable orations, which all ages will read with delight, were delivered to an empty house. A

member, now a peer, himself one of the most eloquent men of England, whose political and personal ties bound him particularly to remain during the delivery of one of these master-pieces, after nearly every body else had withdrawn, actually crawled out of the house to escape unnoticed from an intolerable scene. Johnson, the editor of Chatham's famous speeches, in a number of the Rambler, treats the graces of eloquence with elaborate ridicule and contempt; and Hume, in his Essay on Eloquence, and Blair, in his Lectures on Rhetoric, acknowledge that they are not characteristics of British oratory. The printed speeches of England are among the finest specimens of the art of composition; but it is notorious that in parliament and at the bar the most celebrated speeches avail nothing with those to whom they are addressed; and eloquence, in the pulpit of the established church is, I believe, a thing unheard of. The talent of effective oratory is much more common in America, where laws are made, controversies are settled, and proselytes are gained, by it, every day. An eloquent professor or lecturer, in England, is very rare, if there be any such. While it is well known that the medical school of Philadelphia owes its success, in part, to the mere eloquence of its lecturers. Crowds of listeners are continually collected in all parts of this country to hear eloquent speeches and sermons. The legislature, the court house, and the church, are thronged with auditors of both sexes, attracted by that talent which was the intense study and great power of the ancient orators. Thought, speech, and action, must be perfectly free to call forth the utmost

powers of this mighty art. It requires difficulties ; but it needs hopes. Its temples in free countries are innumerable. When its rites are administered the most divine of human unctions searches the marrow of the understanding ; the orator is inspired, the auditor is absorbed, by the occasion.

Annual sessions of five and twenty legislatures multiply laws, which produce a numerous bar, in all ages the teeming offspring of freedom. Their number in the United States has been lately computed at six thousand ; which is probably an under estimate. American lawyers and judges adhere with professional tenacity to the laws of the mother country. The absolute authority of recent English adjudications is disclaimed : but they are received with a respect too much bordering on submission. British commercial law, in many respects, inferior to that of the continent of Europe, is becoming the law of America. The prize law of Great Britain was made that of the U. States by judicial legislation during flagrant war between the two countries. The homage lately paid by the English prime minister to the neutral doctrines proclaimed by the American government, in the beginning of the French revolution, which declares them worthy the imitation of all neutral nations, may teach us that the American state papers contain much better principles of international jurisprudence than the passionate and time-serving, however brilliant, sophisms of the British admiralty courts. On the other hand, English jurisprudence, while silently availing itself of that of all Europe, and adopting without

owning it, has seldom if ever made use of an American law book, recommended by the same language, system, and subject matter. American translations of foreign jurists, on subjects in which the literature of English law is extremely deficient, appear to be less known in England than translations of the laws of China. This veneration on our part, and estrangement on theirs, are infirmities characteristic of both. Our professional bigotry has been counteracted by penal laws in some of the States against the quotation of recent British precedents, as it was once a capital offence in Spain to cite the civil law, and as the English common law has always repelled that excellent code from its tribunals. I cannot think, with the learned editor of the Law Register, that late English law books are a dead expense to the American bar ; or that, in his strong phrase, scarcely an important case is furnished by a bale of their reports. But I deplore the colonial acquiescence in which they are adopted, too often without probation or fitness. The use and respect of American jurisprudence in Great Britain will begin only when we cease to prefer their adjudications to our own. By the same means we shall be relieved from disadvantageous restrictions on our use of British wisdom ; and our system will acquire that level to which it is entitled by the education, learning, and purity of those by whose administration it is formed.

In their national capacity, the United States have no common law, but all the original States are governed by that of England, with adaptations. In

one of the new States, in which the French, Spanish, and English laws, happen to be all naturalised, an attempt at codification from all these stocks is making, under legislative sanction. In others, possibly all of the new States, which have been carved out of the old, a great question is in agitation whether the English common law is their inheritance. Being a scheme of traditional precepts and judicial precedents, that law requires continual adjudications, with their reasons at large, to explain, replenish, and enforce it. Of these reports, as they are termed, no less than sixty four, consisting of more than two hundred volumes, and a million of pages, have already been uttered in the United States ; most of them in the present century ; and in a ratio of great increase. The camel's load of cases, which is said to have been necessary to gain a point of law in the decline of the Roman empire, is therefore already insufficient for that purpose in the American. Add to which, an American lawyer's library is incomplete without a thousand volumes of European legists, comprehending the most celebrated French, Dutch, Italian, and German treatises on natural, national, and maritime law, together with all the English chancery and common law. I have heard of an American lawyer of eminence whose whole property is said to consist in a large and expensive law library.

Notwithstanding this mass of literature, the law has been much simplified in transplantation from Europe to America : and its professional as well as political tendency is still to further simplicity. The

brutal, ferocious, and inhuman laws of the feudists, as they were termed by the civilians, (I use their own phrase,) the arbitrary rescripts of the civil law, and the harsh doctrines of the common law, have all been melted down by the genial mildness of American institutions. Most of the feudal distinctions between real and personal property, complicated tenures and primogeniture, the salique exclusion of females, the unnatural rejection of the half-blood, and ante-nuptial offspring, forfeitures for crimes, the penalties of alienage, and other vices of European jurisprudence, which nothing but their existence can defend, and reason must condemn, are either abolished, or in a course of abrogation here. Cognisance of marriage, divorce, and posthumous administration, taken from ecclesiastical, has been conferred on the civil tribunals. Voluminous conveyancing and intricate special pleading, among the costliest mysteries of professional learning in Great Britain, have given place to the plain and cheap substitutes of the old common law. With a like view to abridge and economise litigation, coercive arbitration, or equivalents for it, have been tried by legislative provision; jury trial, the great safeguard of personal security, is nearly universal, and ought to be quite so, for its invaluable political influences. It not only does justice between the litigant parties, but elevates the understanding and enlightens the rectitude of all the community. Sanguinary and corporal punishments are yielding to the interesting experiment of penitential confinement. Judicial official tenure is mostly independent of legislative

interposition, and completely of executive influence. The jurisdiction of the courts, is far more extensive and elevated than that of the mother country. They exercise, among other high political functions, the original and remarkable power of invalidating statutes, by declaring them unconstitutional : an ascendancy over politics never before or elsewhere asserted by jurisprudence, which authorises the weakest branch of a popular government to annul the measures of the strongest. If popular indignation sometimes assails this authority, it has seldom if ever been able to crush those who have honestly exercised it ; and even if it should, though an individual victim might be immolated, his very martyrdom would corroborate the system for which he suffered. Justice is openly, fairly, and purely administered, freed from the absurd costumes and ceremonies which disfigure it in England. Judicial appointment is less influenced by politics ; and judicial proceedings more independent of political considerations.

The education for the bar is less technical, their practice is more intellectual, the vocation is relatively at least more independent in the United States, than in Great Britain. Here, as there, it is a much frequented avenue to political honours. All the chief justices of the United States have filled eminent political stations, both abroad and at home. Of the five Presidents of the United States, four were lawyers ; of the several candidates at present for that office, most, if not all, are lawyers. But without any public promotion, American so-

ciety has no superior to the man who is advanced in any of the liberal professions. Hence there are more accomplished individuals in professional life here, than where this is not the case. Under other governments, patronage will advance the unworthy, and power will oppress the meritorious. Even in France, where there are, and always have been lawyers of great and just celebrity, we sometimes see that for exerting the noblest, and, in free countries, the most common duties of their profession, for resisting the powerful and defending the weak, they are liable to irresponsible arrest, imprisonment, and degradation, without the succour and sanctuary of a free press, and dauntless public sympathy. In Great Britain, it is true, there is no such apprehension to deter them : and equally true, that professional, as well as political dignities, are free to all candidates. But the ascendancy of rank, the contracted divisions of intellectual labour, the technicality of practice, combine with other causes to render even the English individuals, not perhaps inferior lawyers, but suborbrate men.

British jurisprudence itself, too, that sturdy and inveterate common law, to which Great Britain owes many of the great popular conservative principles of her constitution—even these have been impaired by long and terrible wars, during which, shut up within their impregnable island, the offspring of Alfred and of Edward, infusing their passions, their politics, and their prejudices into their laws, have wrenched them to their occasions. The distinguishing attributes and merits of the common

law are, that it is popular and mutable ; takes its doctrines from the people, and suits them to their views. While the American judiciary enforces this system of jurisprudence, may it never let wars, or popular passions, or foreign influences, impair its principles.

There are about ten thousand physicians in the United States, and medical colleges for their education in Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Ohio. There are also two medical universities in the state of New York, one in Pennsylvania, one in Maryland, one in Massachusetts, and one in Kentucky ; containing altogether about twelve hundred students. Under the impulses of a new climate and its peculiar distempers, the medical profession has been pursued and its sciences developed with great zeal and success in this country ; whose necessities have called forth a bolder and more energetic treatment of diseases, more discriminating and philosophical, as well as decisive and efficient ; a more scientific assignment of their causes, and ascertainments of their nature. Many medical errors and prejudices, now abandoned in Europe, were first refuted here. What is justly termed a national character, has been given to the medical science of America, and American medical literature is circulated and read in Europe, where several American medical discoveries and improvements have been claimed as European. Anatomy, the most stationary of the medical sciences, is ardently cultivated, and has been advanced by discoveries in the

American schools. Valuable contributions have been made to physiology, and more rational views inculcated of animal economy. An American discovery in chemistry has distinguished its author throughout Europe: Where the achievements of this master spirit of sciences, while, to be sure they leave ours behind, yet encourage it to an application full of promise. It is a merit of the American schools, at least, to have accurately defined the bounds of chemistry and physiology. Our diversified soils and climates, afford inexhaustible healing and balsamic plants, many of which have been adopted into the *materia medica*, and displayed in publications creditable to the literature and some of the fine arts, as well as the science of this country. And the bowels of this continent are rich with sanative minerals, some of which, likewise, have been extracted and made known both to science and by literature. Mr. Cleaveland's treatise on mineralogy is, I believe, used as a text book in Great Britain.

American physicians are probably unrivalled in the knowledge and use of what are termed the heroic remedies. They have introduced new and rational doctrines respecting the operation of remedies; combatting the notion of their reception into the circulation, and referring it to the principle of sympathy. They deny the asserted identity of remedies; believing, that they have succeeded in proving an essential difference in their operation, not only in degree, but in effect. The American improvements in Surgery are too numerous, and

though not the less important, too minute and technical, to be generalised in a summary. Its apparatus, mechanism, and operations, have been improved by a theory and practice equal in science, skill and success, to any in the world. But its greatest melioration is philosophical. The founder of most of the improvements in surgery alluded to, deeming its most skilful operations, but imperfections in the preserving art, reserves them for its last resort, never to be performed till all means of natural cure prove abortive. On this exalted principle the great Hunter taught and practised; uniting humanity and philosophy to science and art; a benefactor, whose original and admirable suggestions it is the merit of American physicians and surgeons to have introduced into their practice in this country, before their imputed innovations were reconciled to pre-conceived opinions in his own.

Midwifery, both practical and theoretical, has also received essential improvements in the American school, some of which have been declared by high authority to mark an æra in the obstetric practice. In the theory and practice of medicine, the improvements are too many and important for my recital. The gastric pathology, the prevailing treatment and theory of hydrocephalus, and of dropsies in general, the boasted European practice in marasmus, the cure of the croup, of gout by evacuations, the arrest of malignant erisipelas, and of mortification, and of inflammation of the veins; in short, a long list of remedial systems, which might be enumerated, though claimed in Europe, belong

to America. The vaunted suggestion of Europe, that fever originates in sympathetic irritation, and that venesection and other evacuations are requisite in the primary stages of it, have long been the established doctrines of America, where they were first demonstrated. American medical science and skill have outstripped those of the rest of the world, Europe included, in the character and treatment of epidemics and pestilences. In this great field, Europe has done little, while the progress of America has been great. Bigoted to antiquated notions the medical science of the old world has stagnated for centuries in prejudices, which have been expelled in the new, where the causes, nature, laws, and treatment of these destructive visitations have been ascertained and systematised. English critics particularly dwell with exultation on their supposed late triumphs over these distempers. Divested of the long prevalent notion of debility and putrescency, they now urge depletion as if the suggestion were their own, whereas thirty years have elapsed since the physicians of this country were in the full employment of it.

The theory and practice of medicine, the fearless and generous resistance of pestilential disease, suggest a recollection of a late medical professor here, whose works are in the libraries of the learned in many countries, and in several languages, whose fascinating manners and eloquent lectures largely contributed to the foundation of a flourishing school, whose zeal, if some times excessive, was characteristic of genius, and the pioneer of success ; whose services,

let me add, as a patriot, and a philanthropist, shed a divine lustre on his career as a physician. The first leading man to lay down his life in battle in the American revolution, was an eminent physician. The best historian of that period, was also an eminent physician : And in a country, which knows no grade above that of the eminent in learning and usefulness, there have been, and there are, many others of this profession to whom more than professional celebrity belongs. They frequently unite political with professional distinctions. Many of the members of this profession, have filled various stations in every branch of our government. Many of them at this moment, occupy high executive and legislative public offices. The pernicious and degrading system which subdivides labour infinitesimally—a system useful perhaps for pin-makers, but most injurious in all the thinking occupations—has no countenance in America. The American physician practices pharmacy, surgery, midwifery ; and is cast on his own resources for success in all he does : The consequence of which is, that he is forced to think more for himself, and of course to excel. In Europe, successful physicians are too often made so by favour or chance. They are, moreover, the luxuries of the metropolis and a few great cities. Throughout the interior of England, generally, the medical attendant is an uneducated apothecary, whose science stops at the compounding of a drug, or the opening of a vein. Even in London, this class is always in reserve to succeed the preliminary and expensive visits of the doctor ;

whose employment, besides, depends too much on the recommendation of these subordinates. In this country, medical skill is much more generally distributed. Every hamlet, every region abounds with educated physicians, whose qualifications to be sure, ultimately depend much on their opportunities: But who, at least for the most part, begin with the recommendations of diplomas.

Perhaps the most humane discovery in modern medicine is vaccination; to which America has no claim: though superior intelligence here has given it much greater effect, than among the ignorant populace of Europe. The doctrine of non-contagion in pestilential distempers, should it be established, must also enjoy great credit as a triumph for humanity. The most distressing prejudices concerning contagion, are not yet extirpated in Europe. I am not authorised to consider a disbelief in this shocking aggravation of any malady, as a point in which the medical profession of America is quite unanimous with respect to yellow fever: but a foreign physician, who lately collected their opinions, ascertained the ratio of non-contagionists to be 567 to 28 contagionists. A late French ambassador in this country, who was bred a physician, has publicly claimed the merit of the discovery of non-contagion for another French physician, who was in practice in this city in 1793, and is now in the service of the king of France. But in a treatise on the yellow fever by Dr. Hillary, published sixty years ago, its contagion is explicitly denied by the unqualified declaration, that 'it has nothing of a

pestilential or contagious nature in it.' That this is not the sentiment prevalent in France, would seem to be inferrible from recent events. A French army was stationed at the foot of the Pyrennees, as a sanitary cordon, to prevent the passage of contagion over those lofty, and frost crowned mountains. Whatever may be the theories or reveries of a few, therefore, it is a remarkable proof of the actual state of the public intelligence on this subject, not only in France, but throughout Europe, that all inquiries concerning the cause of this apparently warlike demonstration were silenced by assurances that its design was to repel contagious disease: under which assertion the wisdom of Europe rested, till the plans thus masked were ripe for execution.

I shall conclude with some views of the American church; which I hope to be able to shew is as justly entitled to that distinctive appellation as the church of Rome, the church of England, the Gallican church, the Greek church, or any others, to theirs respectively.

It is the policy or the prejudice of governments, which use the church as an engine of state, to decry institutions which separate them, and leave religion to self-regulation. They are accused of infidelity and immorality. The want of ecclesiastical respectability is inferred from its want of political protection and influence. These Pagan doctrines have prevailed where ever christianity has been unknown. They were Egyptian, Grecian, Roman; they are Mahometan. But they cannot endure the light of reason and truth. Whoever reads

the text book of Christianity must be convinced that it is the religion of self-government. No European dogma is more unfounded than that republicanism and infidelity are coadjutors. Intelligent men in the United States, with much more unanimity and sincerity than in Europe, believe that without religion humanity would be forlorn and barbarous. And in no country are those ecclesiastical classes and cures, which have formed parts of the institutions of religion, in all times, better established than in this. In estimating the progress and condition of the mind in America, therefore, I have neither disposition nor occasion to deny, that the condition of religion is one of the best tests of the general intellectual state. Independently of their help in the cure of souls, the clergy have always rendered the most important services to the human understanding. Learning and science were long in their exclusive care. In those periods when the mind was most depressed, the church was the chancery of its preservation. To it we owe nearly all the best relics of ancient learning: from it, we still receive much of our education; for here, as elsewhere, most of our teachers are ecclesiastics. It is therefore a very interesting inquiry how the church and its ministers, who are also the ministers of education, fare in any community.

Segregation from political connection and toleration are the cardinal principles of the American church. On the continent of Europe, toleration means, where it is said to exist, catholic supremacy suffering subordinate protestantism. In the

united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, it means a protestant hierarchy, abetted by dissenters, excluding catholics from political privileges, and subjecting them to double ecclesiastical impositions. France, Italy, Ireland, and Spain, have been desolated by contests between church and state. Toleration has won at least part of these bloody fields. But a segregated church does not appear to have made any advance in Europe. In the United States, both of these principles are not only fundamental political laws, but ancient, deep-seated doctrines, whose bases were laid long before political sovereignty was thought of, when Williams, Penn and Baltimore, by a remarkable coincidence, implanted them in every quarter, and in every creed. American toleration, means the absolute independence and equality of all religious denominations. American segregation, means, that no human authority can in any case whatever control or interfere with the rights of conscience. Adequate trial of these great problems, not less momentous than that of political self-governement, has proved their benign solution. Bigotry, intolerance, blood thirsty polemics waste themselves in harmless, if not useful, controversy, when government takes no part. We enjoy a religious calm and harmony, not only unknown, but inconcievable, in Europe. We are continually receiving accessions of their intolerance, which is as constantly disarmed by being let alone. Our schools, families, legislatures, society find no embarrassment from varieties of creed, which in Europe would kindle the deadliest discord.

That these consequences are not the fruits of lukewarmness and disregard to religion, remains to be shewn.

I shall touch but lightly on the dissenting church, as it is called in England ; not because its condition in the United States is not worthy of regard, and a great argument for my object, but because its well known prosperity renders it almost unnecessary that I should dwell on any details of it. Always democratic even in Europe, no reason can be imagined why it should not thrive in the aboriginal republicanism of America, the natural and fruitful soil of spontaneous religion. Accordingly, there are upwards of seven hundred congregational churches in the New England States alone, and nearly that number of clergymen of that denomination, including pastors, unsettled ministers, and licensed preachers : from which enumeration I exclude the Baptists of that quarter, who are uniformly of the congregational order in church government. There is a theological seminary at Andover, in Massachusetts, containing about one hundred and fifty students in divinity. At Harvard college, there is a theological professor of the Anti-trinitarian faith, with whom several resident graduates commonly study. Of the two hundred and thirty congregational ministers of Massachusetts, about seventy are Anti-trinitarians. In Maine, there is a theological seminary, with two professors, and about forty pupils. Yale college in Connecticut, has a theological department attached to it, in which there are three professors, and a considerable number of students. In

Cornwall, in Connecticut, there is also a Heathen mission school, in which, about thirty youths, born in India, on the Pacific ocean, and the western wilds of this continent, or other heathen places, are educated with special reference to ministerial duties in their respective birth places.

The Presbyterian church in the United States, in addition to the congregational, contains about nine hundred ministers, one hundred and thirty five licentiates, one hundred and forty seven candidates, more than fourteen hundred churches, and last year administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to an hundred thousand communicants. It has theological seminaries in the States of New Jersey, New York, and Tennessee : And, as is obvious from these indications, is established on broad and flourishing endowments.

I shall also very summarily touch the condition of those enthusiastic, and, for the most part, itinerant churches, which, ever since their first example in the appearance of the Franciscan and Dominican friars of the thirteenth century, in a similar manner and on similar occasions, have, under various titles, interposed their austere and reviving tenets, into the deserted or decaying quarters of christianity; whose popular and rallying doctrines have a highly beneficial influence on the morals of the community. The Methodist church of America contains three diocesses, eleven hundred itinerant clergy, exclusively clerical, and about three thousand stationary ministers, who attend also to other than ecclesiastical occupations. They reckon twelve conferences,

and more than twenty five hundred places of worship. By the report to the Baptist convention, which sat in June last, at Washington, the places of worship of that persuasion are stated at more than two thousand three hundred; and they reckon a very large number of ministers. There are three theological seminaries of the Baptist church, one in New England, one in the interior of the State of New York, and one at the city of Washington. There were likewise two theological seminaries of the Methodist church, of whose services, however, it has been for the present deprived by accidental circumstances. It is a remarkable and most laudable characteristic of all these religious denominations that their means are applied among other beneficial purposes, always liberally to that of education.

The Universalists have one hundred and twenty preachers, two hundred separate societies, and eight periodical publications. The Lutheran, the Dutch Reformed, and Associate Reformed, the Moravians, the Friends, in short, almost an innumerable roll of creeds, have their several seminaries of education, their many places of worship, numerous clergy or preachers, and every other attribute of secular, as well as spiritual, religion in prosperity.

To the clergy of some of these sects, especially the Presbyterian and Congregational, the American revolution is deeply indebted for its origin, progress, and issue. The generous, yet jealous principles of self-government, proclaimed as the motives of that event, have no more steadfast, uniform, or

invincible adherents, than their followers. Polemical literature, metaphysical knowledge, pulpit eloquence, philological learning, invigorating the mind, and giving it power over the world, are superadded to the laborious and self-denied lives and pure ministry of these ecclesiastics. The dissenters in England form, no doubt, a body of learned and zealous divines : but from the time when England first sent her sons to New England to learn and teach theology to the present day, the American dissenting church, is, at least equal to that of the mother country in intelligence and influence, and much superior in eloquence.

But it is on the American church of England and the American church of Rome, that we may dwell with most complacency. Here, where no political predominance, no peculiar, above all, no mysterious, inquisitorial, arbitrary, or occult polity, no tythes, no titles, peerage, crown, or other such appliances sustain the ministry, where the crosier is as plain as the original cross itself, and the mitre does not sparkle with a single brilliant torn from involuntary contribution,—it is here, I venture to say, that within the last century, the church of England and the church of Rome have constructed more places of worship, (relatively speaking,) endowed more diocesses, founded more religious houses, and planted a stronger pastoral influence, than in any other part of the globe. It is in the United States of America, under the power of American religion that the English and Roman Catholic churches are flourishing.

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Until the revolution, the church of England was the established church in all the American colonies. In Maryland and Virginia, where it was most firmly seated, a sort of *modus* or composition for tythes was assessed by law, either on the parishes or by the polls. In Virginia there were moreover glebes annexed to the parish churches. In New York, there was also a fund taken from the public money, appropriated to the few parishes established there. Throughout New England, Pennsylvania, and the other colonies, if I am not misinformed, though the church of England was the national church, yet it languished in great infirmity, having no other support than the pew rents and voluntary assessments which now, under a very different regimen, supply adequate resources for all the occasions of an establishment which has no rich, and no very poor pastorates.

The whole of these vast regions, by a gross ordinance of colonial misrule, were attached to the London diocess. Most of the incumbents, it may be supposed, those especially supported by tythes, at such a distance from the diocesan, were supine and licentious. As soon as the revolution put a stop to their stipends, they generally ceased to officiate : and in Maryland and Virginia, particularly, the Methodists and Baptists stepped in to their deserted places. The crisis for the church of England at this conjuncture, was vital. Several of its ministers at first joined their compatriots for the independence declared. But few endured unto the end of the struggle. When the enemy were in



possession of Philadelphia, then the capital of the country, where Congress sat, and that inimitable assembly was driven to resume its deliberations at the village of Yorktown, they elected for their chaplain, a clergyman of the church of England, who had been expelled his home in this city by its capture. Every ingenuous mind will do justice to the predicament in which such an election placed an American pastor of the English church. The cause of independence, to which he was attached was in ruin ; the government forced from its seat, the army routed and disheartened, the country prostrate and nearly subdued by a triumphant enemy in undisputed occupation of the capital. The chaplain elected by Congress under such circumstances proved worthy of their confidence. Without other attendant, protection, or encouragement, than the consciousness of a good cause, he repaired to the retreat of his country's abject fortunes, to offer daily prayers from the bosom of that immortal assembly which never despaired of them, to the almighty providence, by which they were preserved and prospered. The chaplain of Congress, at Yorktown, has been rewarded for those days of trial. Already, in the compass of his own life, and ministry, he is at the head of the ten bishoprics into which the American church of England has since then expanded in the United States, with three hundred and fifty clergymen, about seven hundred churches, a theological seminary, and every other assurance of

substantial prosperity. Within his life time there was but one, and at the commencement of his ministry but three episcopal churches in Philadelphia, and they in jeopardy of the desecration from which they were saved by his patriotic example and pious influence. It would be an unjust and unacceptable homage, however, to him, not to declare that the intrinsic temperance and resource of popular government mainly contributed to the preservation of the English church in America, where it has since advanced far more than in the mother country, during the same period, and where it is probably destined to flourish greatly beyond the English example. Of this there can be no doubt if it thrives henceforth as it has done heretofore: for under the presidency of a single prelate, still in the effective performance of all the duties of a good bishop, and a good citizen, the American church of England, without a particle of political support, has, as we have seen, extended itself. Within a few years a million of pounds sterling were appropriated by parliament, on the special recommendation of the crown of Great Britain, for the repair and construction of churches; with views doubtless to political as much as to religious consequences. I venture to predict that within the period to elapse from that appropriation to its expenditure, a larger sum of money will have been raised in the United States by voluntary subscription, and expended for similar purposes and to greater effect.

The Roman catholic church grows as vigorously

as any other in the soil and atmosphere of America. The late (first) archbishop of that church, likewise adhered with unshaken and zealous constancy to the cause of the American revolution : and indeed, served for it in a public station. His illustrious relative is one of the three signers of a charter, destined to have more influence on mankind than any uninspired writing, who have lived to enjoy its developements during half a century; in which period, all North and South America have been regenerated, and the most intelligent portions of Europe quickened with the spirit of that political scripture. He periled a million of dollars when he pledged his fortune to the declaration of independence : as to the short sighted, the patriot priest might have seemed to risk his religion when he abjured European allegiance. But neither of them has had reason to regret the effects of self-government on a faith of which they have both, at all times, been the American pillars and ornaments. From a mere mission in 1790, the Roman catholic establishment in the United States, has spread into an extended and imposing hierarchy ; consisting of a metropolitan see, and ten bishoprics, containing between eighty and a hundred churches, some of them the most costly and splendid ecclesiastical edifices in the country, superintended by about one hundred and sixty clergymen. The remotest quarters of the U. States are occupied by these flourishing establishments ; from the chapels at Damascotti (in Maine) and at Boston, to those of St. Augustine in Florida, and St. Louis in Mis-

school. There are catholic seminaries at Bardonia and Franklin in Kentucky, a catholic clerical seminary at Mission, catholic colleges at St. Louis and New Orleans, where there is likewise a catholic Lancasterian school, two catholic charity schools at Baltimore, two in the District of Columbia, a catholic seminary and college at Baltimore, a catholic college in the District of Columbia, a catholic seminary at Emmitsburg in Maryland, a catholic free school and Orphans' asylum in Philadelphia. These large contributions to education are not, however, so highly respected and supported as many of them are, the most remarkable characteristics of the American Roman catholic church. It is a circumstance pregnant with reflections and results, that the Jesuits, since their suppression in Europe, have been established in this country. In 1801, by a brief of pope Pius the seventh, the society, with the concurrence of the emperor Paul, was established in Russia under a general authority to resume and follow the rule of St. Ignatius of Loyola. A few years later, in 1805, it was the United States of America, with permission to preach, educate, and administer the sacraments, &c. with the consent and approbation of the archbishop. In 1807 a novitiate was opened in Georgetown college in the District of Columbia, which continued to improve till 1814 when being deemed sufficiently established, the congregation was formally organized by a general council. The society now consists of twenty-six fathers for education in theology, seventeen scholarships in philosophy

rhetoric, and belles lettres, fourteen scholastics in the noviciate, twenty-two lay-brothers out of, and four lay-brothers in, the noviciate ; some of whom are dispersed throughout the United States, occupied in missionary duties, and the cure of souls. This statement is enough to prove the marvellous radication of the strongest fibres of the Roman Catholic church in our soil. But the argument does not stop here. The oldest catholic literary establishment in this country, is the catholic college just mentioned, which was founded immediately after the revolution, by the incorporated catholic clergy of Maryland, now capable of containing two hundred resident students, furnished with an extensive and choice library, a philosophical and chemical apparatus of the latest improvement, and professorships in the Greek, Latin, French and English languages, mathematics, moral and natural philosophy, rhetoric, and belles lettres. This institution, I have mentioned, was put in 1805, under the direction of the society of Jesuits : and that nothing might be wanting to the strong relief in which the subject appears, the college thus governed, was by act of Congress of the United States of America, raised to the rank of a University, and empowered to confer degrees in any of the faculties. Thus, since the suppression of the order of Jesuits, about the time of the origin of the American revolution, has that celebrated brotherhood of propagandists been restored in the United States, and its principal and most operative institution organised and elevated by an act of our national Legislature.

In like manner, the Sulpitian monks have been incorporated by act of the legislature of the State of Maryland, in the administration of the flourishing Catholic seminary at Baltimore. Still more remains, however, to be made known: For so silent and unobtrusive is religious progress, when neither announced nor enforced by political power, that it is probable, that many of these curious details may be new to some of those who now hear them mentioned. Those religious houses and retreats, which have been rended from their ancient seats in so many parts of Europe—monasteries and convents—are sprouting up and casting their uncultivated fragrance throughout the kindlier glebes and wilds of America. Even where corruption and abuse had exposed them to destruction, learning turned with sorrow from the abomination of their desolation, and charity wept over the downfall of her ancient fanes. But here, where corruption and abuse can hardly exist in self supported religious institutions—what have we to apprehend from these chaste and pious nurseries of education and alms? What may we not hope, on the contrary, for the mind, from their consecration and extension? In the oldest religious house in America, that of the female Carmelites, near Port Tobacco, in Maryland, the established number of inmates is always complete. The convent of St. Mary's, at Georgetown, in the District of Columbia, contains fifty nuns, having under their care a day school, at which, upwards of a hundred poor girls are educated. The convent of the Sisters of Charity of St.

Joseph, incorporated by the Legislature of Maryland, at Emmittsburg in that State, consists of fifty-nine sisters, including novices, with fifty-two young ladies under their tuition, and upwards of forty poor children. A convent of Ursulines, at Boston, is yet in its infancy, consisting of a prioress, six sisters, and two novices, who undertake to instruct those committed to their charge in every polite accomplishment, in addition to the useful branches of female education. The Emmittsburg Sisters of Charity, have a branch of their convent for the benefit of female orphan children, established in the city of New York, where the Roman Catholics are said to have increased in the last twenty years, from 300 to 20,000. The church of St. Augustine, in Philadelphia, belongs to the Augustine monks, by whom it was built. There is also a branch of the Emmittsburg Sisters of Charity in this city, consisting of several pious and well informed ladies, who superintend the education of orphan children. The Daughters of Charity, have another branch in Kentucky, where there are, likewise, a house of the order of Apostolines, lately established by the Pope at Rome, a cloister of Loretto, and another convent. In the State of Missouri, there is a convent of religious ladies at the village of St. Ferdinand, where a noviciate is seated, of five novices and several postulants, with a thriving seminary, largely resorted to by the young ladies of that remote region, and also a day school for the poor. In New Orleans, there is a convent of Ursuline nuns, of ancient and affluent endowment,

containing fifteen or sixteen professed nuns, and a number of novices and postulants. The ladies of the Heart of Jesus, are about founding a second establishment for education at Opelousas. I will terminate these curious, I hope not irksome, particulars, by merely adding, that in Maine and Kentucky, there are tribes of Indians attached to the Roman Catholic worship, whose indefatigable ministers have always been successful in reclaiming those aborigines of this continent. Vincennes, the chief town of Indiana, where there is now a Roman Catholic chapel, was once a station of the Jesuits for this purpose.

Upon the whole I do not think that we can reckon less than eight thousand places of worship, and five thousand ecclesiastics in the United States, besides twelve theological seminaries, and many religious houses, containing, the former, about five hundred, and the latter three hundred votaries ; all self-erected and sustained by voluntary contribution, and nearly all within the last half century. If this unequalled increase of churches and pastors, and worshippers, attests the prosperity of religion, we may rest assured of its welfare without tythes or political support : and we need not fear its decline from the ascendancy of republicanism.

In proving the existence and magnitude of the American church, I have incidentally, I hope sufficiently, explained its character. For the most part well educated, well informed, and well employed, eloquent, unpensioned, self-sustained, trusting to their own good works, and relying on no court

favour or individual interest for advancement, exempt from that parasite worldly-mindedness which the honest Massillon, even when preaching before Louis XIV. denounced as the canker of political religion, the American clergy are necessarily called upon to think, to read, to write, to preach, and officiate more than the European. Accordingly the divinity of the American church, if I am not mistaken, is much more active at this time, and its literature more efficient than that of England. Indeed it is hardly to be accounted for, that with the great inducements, means and opportunities of the dignitaries of the English church, the mind is at present so little benefited by their contributions to its enlargement. I by no means design to speak disrespectfully of personages of whom I know little more than their titles ; nor do I call in question their learning, their piety, or even their partial usefulness. But assuredly it is fair to infer some radical defect in the system, when of all the modern English bench of bishops and arch-bishops there are very few, I believe, at present in any way known to literature, not one distinguished for eloquence, and on that noble theatre, the house of peers, who ever heard of their performances? Relying on political protection, they seem to have lost the stimulus which urges their American brethren to incessant labours for the furtherance of religion, by eloquent sermons, by contributions to clerical literature, and by the ardent exercise of all their duties. The Roman Catholics boast of numerous converts from protestantism in Europe. Where is the spirit of Tillot-

son and Sherlock, the English successors of the Chrysostoms and the Bazils? Not in England at present. The works of the great fathers of the English church, those wells of doctrine as of language undefiled, appear to be much more likely to be replenished and perpetuated in America.

In this review, I have of course abstained from all polemic and various other delicate considerations connected with it: confining myself to the actual progress of religion as indicative of the tendency of the mind on that subject in this country. Anti-trinitarians and jesuits, convents, and quakers, all grow and thrive together. The most imposing Roman catholic cathedral, and a considerable Unitarian church are built within the sound of each others service; and neither the intelligence nor the tranquillity of the community has suffered by their neighbourhood. There may be those who think indeed that the growth is inordinate, that the establishments are on a scale of expense and influence disproportioned to our numbers, our principles, and even our independence. But to all such suggestions the answer is, that while the whole is spontaneous, there can be nothing to apprehend.

My undertaking will be unfinished, if I do not explain the political and physical causes of the results, to which attention has been invited. But that task, I may not attempt on this occasion, if ever. It is said to be the American fault, to expend itself in details, instead of reasoning by generalisation. I am very sensible of this, with many other faults, in this discourse, in which, scarcely any thing more

is attempted than the collection of facts. But, however imperfect the performance, my views will be accomplished, if the glimpses thus afforded should induce some qualified person to examine and explain the subject philosophically. The operations of American institutions on the human understanding, are a noble study for the labours of a life. The most intelligent portions of mankind, are animated by their impulses ; which already actuate, and, before long, must regulate the destinies of the world. The first settlement of this continent was from England, in a state of revolution, when all minds were exercised with new ideas of religious and political liberty. The associates of Pym and Hampden, and Raleigh, Penn and Locke, founded our institutions. A republican empire, really representative, always as it were, in a state of temperate revolution, has been ever since exciting and evolving the great principles of free agency. Our simple and peaceable, but irresistible, religion and politics, are inoffensively reforming the brilliant abuses, which feudal and chivalric barbarism have rivetted on the nations of Europe. This rouses detraction against the whole elements, moral, physical, and intellectual, as well as political, of our existence. Naturalists, and statist, philosophers, historians, ambassadors, poets, priests, nobles, tourists, journalists—I speak with precision to this catalogue—have in vain sentenced this country to degradation. It already ranks with communities highly refined before America was discovered. France and England were enjoying Augustan ages, when the

place where we are met to discourse of literature and science, was a wilderness. But one hundred and forty years have elapsed, since the patriarch of Pennsylvania first landed on these shores, and sowed them with the germs of peace, toleration, and self-government. Since when, a main employment has been to reclaim the forests for habitation. It is not yet half a century since the United States were politically emancipated ; it is only since the late war that they have begun to be intellectually independent. Colonial habits and reverence still rebuke and counteract intellectual enterprise. Education, the learned professions, the arts, scientific and mechanical, legislation, jurisprudence, literature, society—the mind in a word—require time to be freed from European pupillage.

It was not in a spirit of hostility to any other country, that I undertook to shew what has been already done in this : but by that review to encourage further and keener exertions.

To those who will inquire and reflect, the encouragement of philosophy is as strong as the instinct of patriotism. But the empire of habit and of prejudice is in strong opposition to the supremacy of thought and reason. There was a time when it was not considered disaffection to be ashamed of our country, nor disloyalty to despair of it, when we re-colonised ourselves. But within the last ten years, especially, the mind of America, has thought for itself, piercing the veil of European beau ideal.

Still less, however, than national disparagement

was national vanity the shrine of my sacrifice. Comparative views are indispensable. I might have compared America now with America forty years ago, which would have presented a striking and enlivening contrast. But I preferred the bolder view of America compared with Europe, disclaiming, however, invidious comparisons, which have been studiously avoided. The cause asserted is of too high respect to be defended by panegyric, or avenged by invective. The truth is an ample vindication. Let us strive to refute discredit by constant improvement. Let our intellectual motto be, that naught is done while aught remains to be done : and our study to prove to the world, that the best patronage of religion, science, literature, and the arts, of whatever the mind can achieve, is SELF-GOVERNMENT.



ch. 9.

Remarks, &c. &c.

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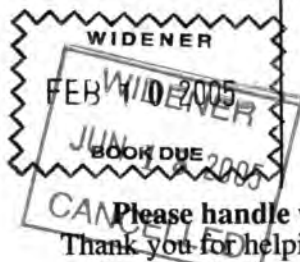
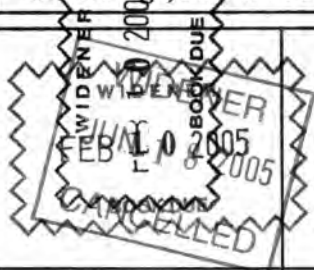


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